Upgradation of rural telephone exchanges

3021. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rural phones are almost non-functional with no dial tone, no speech and sudden snag; and

(b) the action proposed to upgrade rural telephone exchanges to counter the threat of surrender of connections by villagers in favour of mobile phones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir. Rural telephones are generally functioning satisfactorily.

(b) Sir, following steps are taken in a phased manner to upgrade telephone exchanges in rural areas:

(i) Rehabilitation/upgradation of external plant.

(ii) Replacement of long span of overhead alignment by underground cables.

(iii) Introduction of modern technology like Wireless in Local Loop, Time Division Multiple Access/Point to Multi Point (TDMA/PMP), satellite in rural areas.

(iv) Replacement of existing battery set by maintenance free battery sets and provision of generator sets to take care of long duration of power breakdown.

(v) Computerization of fault repair centres.

(vi) Provision of centralized fault booking services at all SDCC (Short Distance Charging Centre) levels.

(vii) Replacement of existing small and medium exchanges into V5.2 AN RAXs (Access Network/Rural Automatic Exchange) and RSUs (Remote Switch Units).

(viii) Replacement of existing transmission media by OFC (Optic Fibre Cable).